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BOSTON UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE PARABLES OF JESUS

Ruth RIGILL

(B.S., Northwestern University, 1921)

In partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

1928

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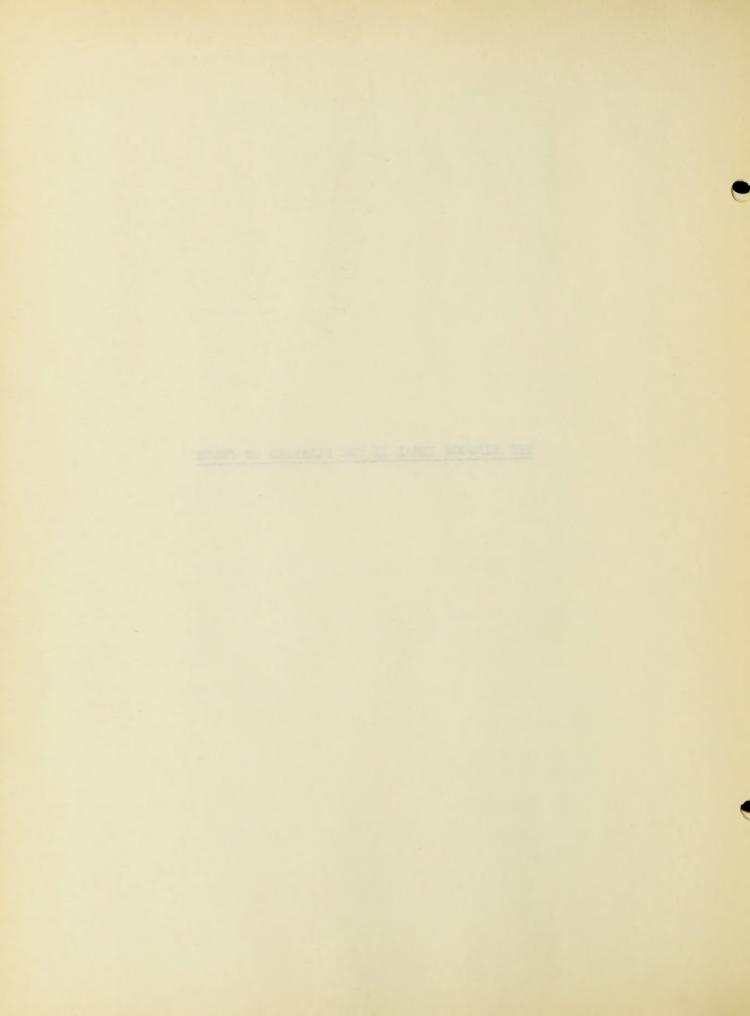
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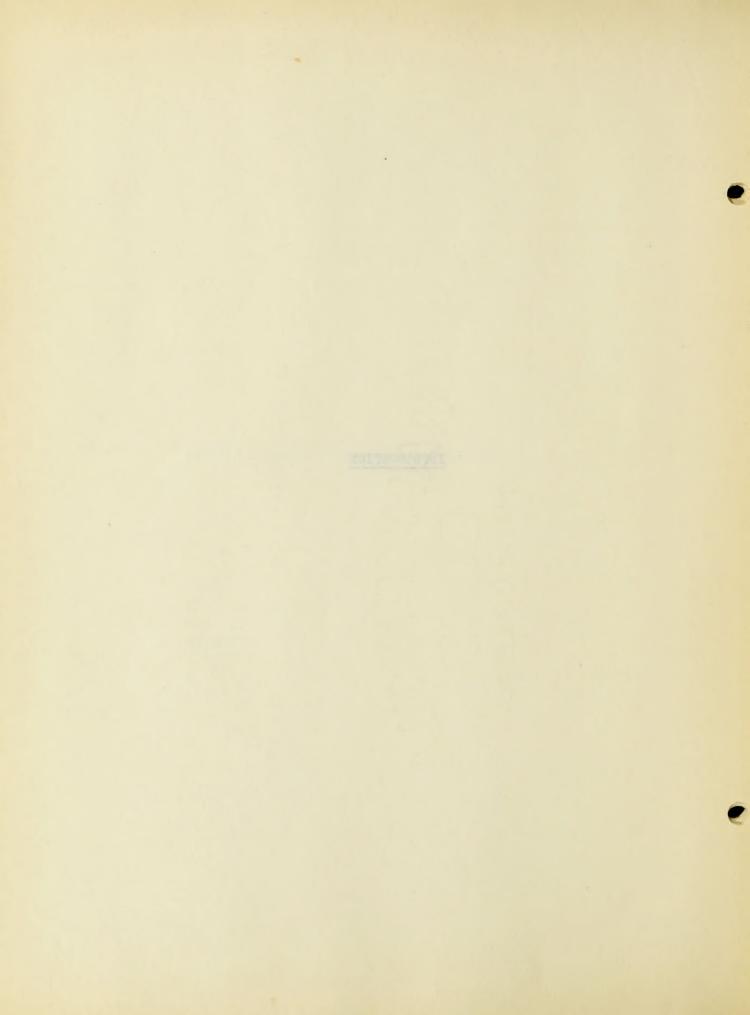
THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE PARABLES OF JESUS



INTRODUCTION

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THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE PARABLES OF JESUS

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Problem

1. The Purpose

Even a cursory reading of the parables of Jesus acquaints us with the fact that a group of them spoken to his general hearers begin with the specific phrase "Kingdom of Heaven": and all of them whether premeditated or called forth by some specific emergency, bear in some way upon some aspect of the most absorbing expectation of the day, namely, the Kingdom of God. And since the parables comprise by far the greater bulk of his popular teaching, we might reasonably expect to find in them a fairly clear statement of what Jesus intended his teachings concerning the Kingdom of Heaven to mean to the masses who heard him. To discover and restate the Kingdom Ideal of Jesus as involved in his parabolic utterances, is the specific purpose of this paper.

But the understanding of the Kingdom Ideal in the parables of Jesus will necessitate a canvassing of the kingdom ideals inherited by him from the prophets and apocalyptists. It will necessitate, also, a grasp of the total Judaistic situation of his day. It is only in the light of this larger whole that the more definite ideal of Jesus can be discovered and enunciated.

2. Definition of Terms

By the Kingdom Ideal, we mean the spiritual interpretation which Jesus gave to the kingdom idea current in Jewish thought of his day.

"But while he thus accepted the idea of the Kingdom as he found it, he employed it only as a framework for his own original message."

^{1.} Mt. 13:24-30; 13:31-32; 13:33-39; 13:44; 13:45-46; 13:47-49; 13:52; 18:23-35; 22:1-14; 25:1-13.

^{2.} Scott, E.F., The Kingdom and the Messiah - Ch. IV p. 91

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B. The Method of Procedure

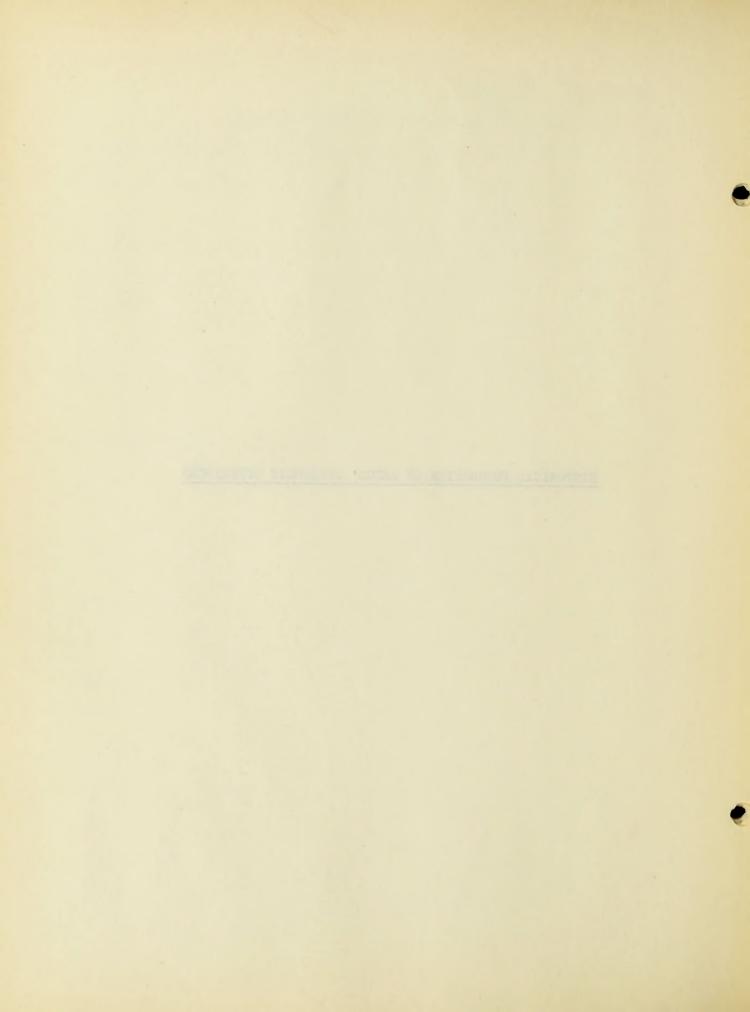
The method of procedure will be as follows:

- (1) To canvas the Old Testament prophecies and the Apocalyptics for a knowledge of the Kingdom of God idea, embodied therein.
- (2) To study the varying conceptions within his inheritance the conceptions predominant in Jewish thoughts of his day.
- (3) To note the probable influence of this heritage upon the thought of Jesus.
- (4) To grasp the ideas concerning the Kingdom in the parables themselves.
- (5) To think through the value of the resultant ideal for a Christian Philosophy of life.

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HISTORICAL FOUNDATION OF JESUS' PARABOLIC UTTERANCES



II. THE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION OF JESUS' PARABOLIC UTTERANCES

A. The Kingdom of God Idea in the Prophets

1. The Pre-prophetic Evidence

For the historical roots of Jesus' ideal of the Kingdom of God, we turn to the prophets of Israel and to the apocalyptists: for Jesus drank deeply from the stream of the past.

In pre-prophetic times, we find no clearly articulated statement of what is known as the Messianic Hope, but the conditions giving rise to the hope undoubtedly prevailed. Though a wide difference of opinion exists as to the exact origin of the hope, there is a general acceptance of the fact that it seemed to rise gradually out of a native discontent with conditions and out of a natural tendency to idealize the future, coming to its own in a very definite way, through the voices of the great ethical prophets of the eighth century.

In a broad and more inclusive sense, the Messianic Hope is a belief in a coming Kingdom of God; it is vastly more than the expectation of a Messiah. Dr. Knudson says that the idea embodies four selements:

First: The New Age - A new eternal Kingdom of God different from the previous order of things;

Second: The judgment - the day of doom for both Israel and other nations which shall precede the new age;

Third: The redemption of Israel;

Fourth: The belief in an expected Messiah.

This total expectation came not as a result of mere natural optimism; it came rather out of beliefs formulated in times of national crises. But

^{1.} A.C. Knudson - Religious Teachings of Old Testament. p. 357

^{2.} A.C. Kmudson - Religious Teachings of Old Testament. p. 351 - Ch. 15

^{3.} A.C.Kmudson - Religious Teachings of Old Testament. Ch. 15. p.351

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underlying it all was the belief in God. There was a God of justice overruling the events of history and working not for man's destruction but for his highest happiness and well being. He was a living and true God and although He had revealed himself to Israel alone, a time would come when He would assert His sovereignty over all nations. This idea of God's sovereignty led into a larger and fuller hope for Israel for she believed that as God triumphed she would triumph. The golden era must lay in the future and thereto did the people and the prophets look.

We must content ourselves here with a mere resume of the growth of this ideal through the prophets of Israel and Judah.

2. The Eighth Century Prophets

As far back as II Samuel, we find the hope expressed in the Kingdom of David. That expectation received a severe shock when the kingdom divided at the conclusion of Solomon's reign. The expectation persisted both in the North and in the South in the prophetic belief in the approaching day of Jahwah. This day of Jahwah is presumed to be a day of judgment on all the enemies of Israel and a day of deliverance and eternal welfare for Israel herself.

The prophet Amos appeared on the scene in the eight century finding the northern nation full of corruption, injustice, and empty ceremonial licentiousness. He reinterpreted for the people the meaning of "the day of Jahwah," "

"Woe unto you that desire the day of Jehovah! Wherefore would ye have the day of Jehovah? Is it darkness and not light?"

^{1.} Kent - Makers and Teachers of Judaism; p. 305-306

^{2.} Scott - The Kingdom and the Messiah. Ch. I. p. 3

^{3.} Scott, E.F., - The Kingdom and the Messiah Ch. I p. 4

^{4.} Scott - The Kingdom and the Messiah Ch. I p. 6 Kent - Makers and Teachers of Judaism. p. 306

^{5.} II Samuel 7:10-16

^{6.} Amos 5: 18,20

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DI-VILY INDUCTION

"Shall not the day of Jehovah be darkness and not light?
Even very dark and no brightness in it?"

It would seem then for Amos that the future outlook would be as follows.

The idea of doom shall be broader than that of Israel's captivity. It

shall be a world judgment of which Israel's destruction shall be only

a part. Other nations shall share in proportion to their unrighteous
ness and since Israel has been especially related to Jahwah, she shall

experience His severest judgments. Inevitable punishment due to oppres
sion, injustice, luxury and licenticusness of leaders shall come in the

form of captivity or destruction, otherwise. Only sincere repentance

in that day of darkness shall result in the salvation of a remnant,
the saving of a righteous element in the nation, - which shall form the

new nucleus of the new Kingdom of God.

Hosea came forth with much the same proclamation as Amos.

Israel's corruption had been due to her lack of knowledge of Jahwah.

She had been faithless to her covenant with Him and had set it aside and disregarded it. The prophet, therefore, proclaimed that judgment and punishment were to come, from which there could be no escape.

Though the nation must die, it shall live again, and shall be restored through heart-felt repentance. The North and South shall again be reunited to share that restoration.

The prophets of the Southern kingdom during this period,
were Micah and Isaiah. Of these two Isaiah was the far more important.
Without going into details of his exposition of affairs, we may

^{1.} A.C. Knudson - (notes on the Prophets)

^{2.} Charles - Eschatology. Ch. III p. 87 Amos 3:2

^{3.} Knudson, A.C., (notes on Prophets) (In various forms and different degrees of clearness - 2:13-16; 3:11,12,14,15; 4:2,3,12; 5:2,3,11,16, 17,27; 6:7-11; 7:8,9,17; 8:1-3,7-10,14, etc.)

^{4. 5:18,20; 8:9.}

^{5. 10:8}

^{6.} Eiselen, Prophecy and Prophets - Ch. 3 p. 69

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in voils need then of their thin bitter collision would be as follows.

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summarize his contribution to the glowing kingdom ideal as follows.

Isaiah gives the new day of Jahwah a somewhat new application.

There shall be a world wide destruction as punishment for the soothsaying, wickedness and corruption prevailing; there shall be, as well,
punishment for the unbelief and lack of trust in Jahwah, followed by

a time of judgment. Those who yet retain their faith in Jahwah shall
be preserved as a remnant in the approaching judgment and restoration.

There shall come into this kingdom, a Messiah - an individual - as a
future deliverer who shall establish the new Kingdom of righteousness
in Jerusalem with its many blessings for those who are privileged to

share it.

Micah likewise proclaims inevitable judgment and impending doom upon the people of Israel and Judah. Samaria shall be destroyed and the disaster shall reach even unto Jerusalem. A remnant shall be caught up and saved. A new era of peace and prosperity shall come with all nations sharing it, in obedience to Jahwah's will in their respective territories and possessions. There shall be a time for redemption with Israel restored and Zion reigning in all her glory.

There shall be, too, a renewal of the covenant relation between Israel and Jahwah.

3. The Seventh and Sixth Century Prophets

There was a new set of conditions for those who followed Isaiah. The northern kingdom was at an end; the South was a vassal

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^{1. 5:1-30}

^{2.} Knudson, A. C. (notes)

^{3. 1:26}

^{4. 9:2-7; 11:1-9; 32:1-8.}

^{5. 30:18-26}

^{6.} Charles - Eschatology. Ch. III pp. 92-93. 2:12-13

^{7.} Kmudson, A.C. (notes on Prophets)

^{8. 2:12-13; 4:6-8; 5:10-15}

^{9. 6:3-5; 7:20}

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DELY SOMETHINGS

of Assyria, which, likewise, was moving toward calamity and downfall. In Judah proper, Manasseh, who turned out to be the most destructive of kings, shed more innocent blood than any before him. In the light of all this, the seventh century prophets do their work.

There seems to be no definite contribution to the glowing

Messianic Hope in the book of Nahum; nor is there anything very positive

on this matter in the book of Habakkuk. In Nahum, the destruction of

l Assyria is predicted and this expected downfall of both Assyria and

Nineveh were to prepare the way for the redemption and permanent

2

exaltation of Zion. Habakkuk shows a spirit of determined hopefulness,

with the saving of the righteous Jews in a possible promise of deliverance.

Zephaniah's prophecy opens with an announcement of an immanent world judgment as the day of Jahwah. No one shall escape the day of darkness and terror for all nations shall be assembled together in order to be destroyed by the fierce anger of Jahwah.

"Therefore wait ye for me, saith Jehovah, until the day I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger; for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy."

As a result of judgment, there shall be the saving of a remnant and the conversion of choice portions of nations of the earth, all of which shall be cared for by Jahwah himself.

With Jeremiah we reach something more significant. He built on the foundation laid by Amos, Hosea and Isaiah. As the last of the pre-exilic prophets, he appears on the threshold of a political down-

^{1. 1:14}

^{2. 1:15}

^{3. 2:1-4}

^{4.} Eiselen - Prophecy and the Prophets. Ch. 8 p. 164-165

^{5.} Charles - Eschatology p. 98. 3:8

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fall. Before him the prophets had proclaimed condemnation and doom
and only in a few cases was the prospect held out for a regenerated
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national life. The sin of Judah and the faithlessness of Israel were
evident. Impending destruction and doom was expected as a result and
such could be averted only by the repentance and conversion of Israel.

Jeremiah's message does not continue to be one of doom throughout his prophetic utterances. As he passes through some of the years of
exile with the people, his message carries new hope. He believes firmly
in the return of both the northern and southern exiles from their cap4
tivity. Jahwah's chosen people shall be restored to their folds as a
5
mucleus for a new kingdom. There is a hint of a future Messianic ruler
6
of the line of David, whose name shall be "Jehovah our righteousness"
and under whom Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell in safety.

4. _The Fifth and Fourth Century Prophets

In pre-exilic times, the day of Jahwah and Divine Judgment were mainly conceived collectively as one of doom on the nation. "In exilic times and subsequent times, Divine Judgment was conceived as 7 dealing with the individual Israelites," as well. Along with this developed the tendency toward Universalism - that of redemption for all peoples. The culmination of these two trends found expression in the prophet Jeremiah and was further emphasized by those following him. Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah and Joel contribute to the Particularistic point of view; Deutero-Isiah, certain Psalms, Malachi, Jonah and Ruth stress Universalism in relation to the Kingdom idea. We shall

^{1.} Charles - Eschatology Ch. III p. 101

^{2. 2:1-6:30}

^{3.} Knudson, A.C. (Notes on the Prophets) 3:19-24

^{4.} Knudson, A.C., (Notes on Prophets)

^{5. 23:1-5}

^{6.} Knudson, A.C. (Notes on the Prophets) 23:5-6

^{7.} Charles - Eschatology Ch. III p. 100

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state briefly the emphasis given to each by the post-exilic prophets.

According to Ezekiel, Israel had always sinned. His mes
age comes, therefore, as one of demunciation and doom for wrong doing.

He predicts that Jerusalem shall fall and with her downfall all foreign nations shall be destroyed. He firmly believes in the repentance and restoration of Jahwah's chosen people, which shall come after forty years. Both Israel and Judah shall again be re-established in their analyse lands and Israel herself shall be so endowed with fertility as to receive all the exiles. A new king from the line of David shall be to them a perfect ruler unlike the shepherds who have gone before. The ideal state shall hold a social, a political, a cultured, a religiomoral and ecclesiastical ideal. All who share it will have been prepared with moral and spiritual regeneration, - a close fellowship with Jahwah, himself.

Haggai appeared as the first real post-exilic prophet some sixteen years after the return of the exiles. Cyrus, then in power, has given permission to all Jews to return to their former homes. Indifference and carelessness in religious practices and the nonfulfillment of past prophecies created a spirit of religious indifference and skepticism. The prophet saw a need of interpreting signs of the times. Rebellions in the east after the death of Cyrus convinced them that hostile world powers were about to be removed for the establishment of a Kingdom of God. He proclaims that Jahwah shall overthrow all

^{1. 20:8; 23:3}

^{3.16:60}ff;-17:22ff.

^{5. 36:8,9,29}

^{2. 1:1-24}

^{4.} Knudson, A.C. (Notes on Prophets)

^{6. 21:27}b

^{7. 36:25-27}

^{8.} Eiselen - The Prophetic Books of Old Testament. p. 547 vol. II

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of the kingdom a prince of the line of David, Zerrubbabel, His Servant,
who shall reign in Jerusalem on the completion of the building of the
temple. A note of universalism creeps out, too, as "he expresses the
hope that the nations of the earth overawed by Jahwah's majesty and power
will recognize his supremacy and bring their precious things as offerings
2
to him."

Zechariah, a contemporary of Haggai, expresses more fully the thoughts of Haggai. He pronounces, likewise, the "day of Jahwah" as a day when all hostile powers shall be destroyed, - a precondition of Messianic time. All promises center around the rebuilding of the temple for therein is life bound to ceremonial holiness. The "Branch," identified with Zerebbabel, a descendant of David, shall forever reign in 4 peace. The temporal and spiritual blessings flowing therefrom shall be enjoyed by the Jews primarily. In so far as other nations survive 5 the "day," they shall become worshippers of Jahwah.

The teaching of the Book of Joel centers around the "day of Jahwah" as a great crisis in which Jahwah will manifest Himself in the destruction of His enemies and the exaltation of His friends. The attitude of heart and life toward Him will determine His character.

There shall be judgment upon all nations and the destruction of all fentiles. Israel alone shall be saved and glorified with the center of her rule in Jerusalem. There is no mention of a Messianic king

^{1.} Eiselen - The Prophetic Books of Old Testament. p. 553 vol. II

^{2.} Eiselen - The Prophetic Books of Old Testament. p. 553 vol. II

^{3.} Charles - Eschatology. Ch. III p. 117 1:18-21

^{4. 1:17; 2:10}

^{5. 2:11; 8:20}

^{6.} Eiselen - The Prophetic Books of Old Testament. vol. II p. 402

^{7. 3:12;} Charles - Eschatology. Ch. III. p. 119

^{8. 3:18-20}

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who plays an important part as in former prophecies. The only assurance of deliverance comes on the basis of a "godly sorrow that worketh 2 repentance for salvation."

In the teachings of Deutero-Isaiah there "are gathered as in a focus all the great and noble meditations of prophecy which preceded him." It is assumed that the judgment has fallen, - that the exile has been a reality. Israel has been blotted out and her survivors have been carried into exile. It follows that comfort and consolation are necessary to revive and encourage the heart-broken. Restoration has become a means of carrying out Jahwah's redemptive purpose for the whole race and in this Israel's deliverance shall be a revelation of sole deity of Jahwah to the surrounding nations. She shall become the minister of salvation to the rest of mankind. All this shall mark a new age - an age of universal salvation in which all nations shall share in the blessings.

In some of the Psalms a hint of universalism stands out.

Psalm 22:27-31, "All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to

Jahwah, and all the kindreds of nations shall worship before him."

Psalm 65:5 expresses "God the confidence of all the ends of the earth."

In Psalm 86:9 - there is the belief in a creator. "Yea, all nations should come to worship" for God is their creator. Psalm 87 sums up all the highest thought of the past, - "Jerusalem shall be the mother city of all nations."

When Malachi came forth with his message, he found Israel unfaithful, as she had been in the past. The temple had been rebuilt

^{1.} Eiselen - Prophetic Books of Old Testament Vol. II. p. 403

^{2.} Eiselen - Prophetic Books of Old Testament Vol. II. p. 404

^{3.} Eiselen - Prophetic Books of Old Testament Vol. I. p. 234.

^{4.} Charles - Eschatology. Ch. II. p. 110-111

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but no promises had been fulfilled. Israel had gone backward in her land morals and in her public worship. Indifference and skepticism reigned.

Malachi therefore pronounces "a day of Judgment" for Israel. Only the righteous shall be delivered to inherit a life of permanent prosperity and felicity in the Kingdom. There shall be no Messianic king for Jahwah himself shall interfere on behalf of his people.

The Book of Jonah throws little light directly on the kingdom idea. Its tendency of thought is that of Universalism, written to counteract exclusiveness and particularism. The Kingdom shall be Jahwah's and only true fear and repentance shall bring salvation from Him.

The Book of Ruth also emphasizes the universal trend. Old

Deuteronomic laws stressed by Ezra and Nehemiah have "forbidden anyone

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of the tenth generation to enter into assembly with Jahwah." Inter
marriage as stressed herein, becomes a means of bringing about redemption,

and in bringing foreign nations into relations with Jahwah.

vidual made themselves felt, especially so as Jeremiah and Ezekiel

come to give emphasis to it. Growing from this, the righteous nation

and the righteous individual shall be blessed with a resurrection life;

the individual must not seek to be blessed apart from his brethern. In

6

the earlier chapters of Isaiah the people look forward to the establishment of a Kingdom in which the righteous dead shall rise and share in

the blessedness of the regenerate nation. This limitation of the

righteous goes back to the primitive form of conception and comes as

^{1. 3:5,14}

^{2. 3:1-5; 3:17}

Eiselen - Prophetic Books of Old Testament p. 611 vol. II

^{3.} Eiselen - Prophetic Books of Old Testament p. 439 vol. II

^{4.} Century Bible - Thatcher - Ruth p. 178

^{5.} Charles - Eschatology - Ch. III p. 125

^{6.} Isaiah 26:1-19

^{7.} Charles - Eschatology - Ch. III p. 127

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the genuine product of Jewish inspiration. Embodied in this section as 2
well, is the belief in a communion with God and with the community.

Such a life must have its beginning in the present life and enter into resurrected life immediately after death.

Hosea mentions a religious transformation of character as
3 4
a spiritual resurrection. Also Ezekiel emphasizes it on a larger scale
and postulates a moral regeneration of the people.

6. Summary of the Prophetic Teachings Concerning the Kingdom.

Previous to the Babylonian exile, the following ideas seem to prevail. On the one hand there were those who followed the older idea of the day of Jahwah as the day of Judgment upon the enemies of Israel and a day of Israel's exaltation. Among these were Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah. On the other hand, the eighth and seventh century prophets taught that Israel and Judah because of their sins, would suffer exile in disaster, but that there would be a restoration out of this disaster of the faithful and repentant ones— a restoration, ethically conditioned.

With the exile the outlook changes. Israel has already suffered hence the future must bring her, not doom but salvation. And this outlook for the future took on a two-fold trend. Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah and Joel in the main look for the complete glorification of Israel to the exclusion of the rest of the world or of their complete subordination. Deutero-Isaiah, Jeremiah, Malachi, certain Psalms, Jonah and Ruth look for the universal sway of Jahwah over all the world; the conversion of all nations unto Him. And the Servant passages of Deutero-Isaiah point to the suffering Israel as the instrument in the hands of God for the redemption of all nations.

I. Charles-- Eschatology- Ch. IIIp. 128-129.

^{2.} Isaiah 26. Charles- Eschatology Ch. IIIp. 129

^{3.} Hosea 6:2

^{4.} Ezekiel 37.

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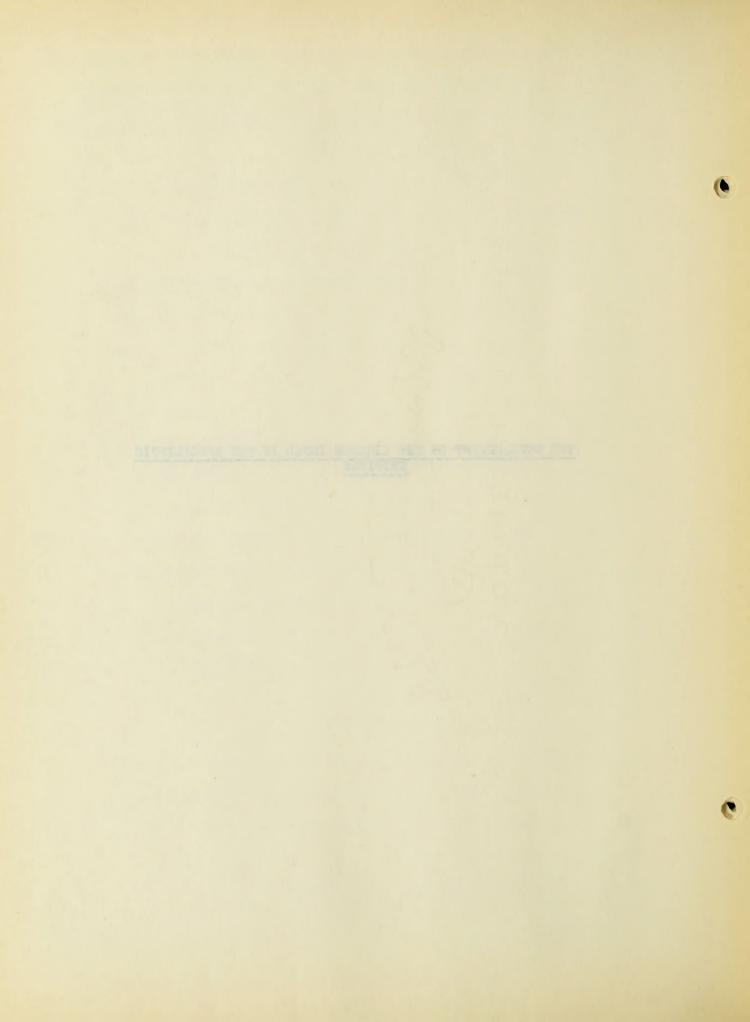
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THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE APOCALYPTIC WRITINGS



B. The Development of the Kingdom Ideal in the Apocalyptic Writings

1. The Writings

Unfortunately and perhaps fortunately also for Israel, the hopes aroused at the time of restoration of the Babylonian Exile, were still further deferred. What was worse, greater troubles came upon them; troubles that threatened the very existence of the truer life of Israel. The tyrannous procedure of Antiochus Epiphanes and the persecutions that followed, threatening as they did, the destruction of all that Israel held dear, brought into being a revival of the Messianic Hope in a heightened and transcendent form.

The Book of Joel (about 400 B.C.) bridges, in a measure, the gap between the late prophetic writings and the apocalypses, and embodies elements of both periods. Herein we find a nearer approximation to the idea of a final world judgment than elsewhere in the Old Testament. The day of Jahwah seems only to justify Israel against the world. Before that "day", all members of the nation shall be filled with the spirit 1 2 of God. Signs of the approaching judgment shall be seen in nature.

"And I shall show wonders in the heaven and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah come."

The Book of Daniel (about 168 B.C.), the forerunner and herald of subsequent apocalyptic developments, is the chief product of this era. In the main, the outlook is confined to this world. There is entertained the thought that God shall intervene and bring judgment on the world when evil has reached its climax. His throne shall be set up and all

^{1.} Joel 2:28,29; Charles-Eschatology, Ch. III p. 119

^{2.} Joel 2:30,31

^{3.} Charles - Eschatology, Ch. 7, p. 243 (7:21-22.)

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^{1.} Design - Temporating, Mr. V. p. 200 (Transport

world powers overthrown. An everlasting dominion shall be given to his lead to saints and these shall "break in pieces and consume" all the Kingdoms of the world and all surviving nations shall serve them. The righteous dead shall share in the eternal life and blessedness of the Kingdom. Israel shall thus be delivered by supernatural help in the time of need. No regularly expected Messiah as of former times shall be expected. A "Son of Man" identified with the figure "like a human being" shall appear in the clouds of heaven and shall be given universal and everlasting dominion.

The Similitudes (about 170 B.C.) consisting of Chapters 3770 of Ethiopic Enoch, stand alone among the Jewish writers in many re4
spects. The writer clings fast to the hope of the Everlasting Messianic
Kingdom of the Old Testament, yet the idea of the Kingdom itself undergoes a transformation in that it shall not have a place on the present
earth as true to the hope of the Old Testament; rather it shall exist
transformed in a new heaven and a new earth. There is combined in one
future, both the hopes of the individual and the nation. The severed
hopes are thus for once united in a high spiritual synthesis. A supernatural king shall come as the expected Messiah, bearing the names of
the "Righteous One," the "Elect One," the "Christ," and the "Son of Man"
and bringing with Him, the revelation of good and evil. He shall possess
dominion and in him shall abide the spirit of power. He shall sit on
his throne of glory, the throne of God, in the execution of his judgment with the Head of Days.

^{1.} Daniel 7:14-22

^{2.} Ibid - 12:1-3

^{3.} Moore - Judaism - Messianic Expections p. 334

^{4.} Charles - Eschatology - Ch. 6, p. 213

^{5. 62:6}

^{6. 51:2; 55:4}

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The Psalms of Solomon (about 70-40 B.C.) written some decades after the Similitudes, express the hope of a Messiah in a single person, l bearing the title, the Christ, from the house and lineage of David.

"Behold, O Lord, and raise up unto them their king,
The Son of David, in the time which thou, O, God, knowest,
That He may reign over Israel thy Servant."

"The Messiah as a 'righteous king' and taught of God, shall
be pure from sin, so that He may rule a mighty people." The ungodly
nations shall be destroyed by word of His mouth, and with the destruction of hostile nations, all others shall become subject to him.

Because of this expectation as well as that of the Similitudes, light is thrown on the degree of intensity with which the expectation of a personal Messiah was cherished in the first century of the Christ-an era and "the guise in which the people expected him to appear."

The Messianic Kingdom as mentioned in these eighteen Psalms, is one apparently of Messianic duration, only to be shared and enjoyed by the surviving righteous.

"Blessed are they that shall be born in those days.

To behold the blessing of Israel, which God shall bring to pass in the gathering together of the tribes."

It shall exist only as long as the Messianic ruler himself reigns.

The latter part of the book refers only to a Kingdom for the restored tribes of Israel. There is reference as well to a promised vengeance upon the hostile nations and sinners. Eternal life shall be granted to the righteous without a resurrection of the body.

In the first century of the Christian era, the thought of an eternal Messianic Kingdom passed away and the hope of a temporary king-

^{1.} Charles - Eschatology Ch. 6, p. 221. 17:23-25; 17:36; 18:6-8

^{2. 17:27}

^{5. 17:50}

^{3.} Charles - Eschatology Ch. 6,p.222

^{6.} Ibid p. 224

^{4.} Ibid p. 223

^{7.} Ibid p. 225

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The Book of Slavonic Enoch refers to a time of rest and blessedness as its Messianic period. The Kingdom shall last one thousand years. At the end of time, there shall be a final judgment - "a day of the Lord", and the beginning of eternity. Prior to final judgment, the souls of the departed shall be found in their immediate places. The angels shall await judgment in the second heaven; the righteous shall escape by entering immediately into Paradise; and the wicked shall be cast into everlasting torment.

The Apocalypse of Baruch teaches the doctrine of a personal Messiah in a temporary Kingdom. There shall come a time of tribulation at the close of which the Messiah shall be revealed. All who have fallen asleep in the hope of a Messiah shall rise again. A second Apocalypse of Baruch refers to a Kingdom to come at the end of a period of corruption. A third Apocalypse refers also to a temporary Messianic period, wherein sin and wickedness have no place.

The 4 Ezra Apocalypse gives signs of the last times - an outlook into the future. The Messiah as the Son of God shall be revealed and with him shall appear certain saints. The Kingdom shall last four

^{1.} Charles - Eschatology - Ch. 6, p. 225

^{2. 8:17}

^{3.} Ibid Ch. 7, p. 261

^{4.} Ibid Ch. 7, p. 262

^{5.} Ch. 8,9,13:3,5

^{6.} Charles, Eschatology - Ch. 7, p. 270,271

^{7.} Ibid, p. 285.

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hundred years at the close of which the Messiah and all men shal die.

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A second division of 4 Ezra refers to a "son of Man" vision, in which
the "Son of Man" is pictured as the Messiah. The multitudes shall be
destroyed, after which the ten tribes which have been in captivity,

3
shall be received back into Zion. No limit of duration, no judgment
or general resurrection have a place.

The Eagle vision predicts the agency of the Messiah to come

4
from the House of David, who shall save the residue of God's people
in Palestine and fill them with joy, even to the day of judgment.

The Ezra Fragment translates Ezra to live with the Messiah

5
till all times are ended.

An important feature of this revived apocalypse is that the Messianic age is not final; it endures only till the last judgment, the 6 issues of which lie beyond the time.

2. Summary of the Apocalyptic Teachings Concerning the Kingdom of God.

Between the Book of Daniel and the appearance of Jesus, this apocalyptic expectation grows and develops and takes on various forms.

In Daniel there is the view that the Kingdom shall be of eternal duration. The Similitudes express the hope of a transformed earth in heaven. Resurrection shall be for all Israel. In certain cases it shall be granted to all mankind (Apocalypse of Baruch).

Judgment is given various emphases. There is the view that it shall come at a great crisis in national history. There is a second view that it shall come as a universal and final retribution. Still

^{1.} Charles, Eschatology Ch. 7, p. 285

^{2. 4} Ezra (13:2-13)

^{3.} Charles-Eschatology Ch. 7, p. 288

^{4. 12:32 -} Charles, op.cit. p. 289

^{5. 14:9}

^{6.} Moore - Judaism - Messianic Expectation - p. 339

^{7.} Hastings - Dictionary of the Bible - Eschatology, p. 748

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^{1.} Carton, Topasology Co. 7, v. 182

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another emphasis places it at the beginning or close of the Messianic Kingdom, executed by a human agent or administered by God himself.

Our study of the contributions of the prophets and apocalyptists to Israel's Messianic Hope, leads to the conclusion that in the time of Christ three main types of this Kingdom hope were abroad: first, the Nationalistic or Kingly hope; second, the Apocalyptic or Catastrophic type; third, the ethical and Universalistic type. These shade into each other, yet are fundamentally distinct. The Nationalistic hope remained so strong in the minds of the common people that false Messiahs who rose were able quickly to gather about them thousands in the hope that deliverance had come. The Apocalyptic type looked for a supernatural Kingdom rather than a temporal one. The inauguration of this Kingdom lay solely upon the will of God and its exact time was clothed in mystery. This idea of hope was a powerful influence later on in the thought of Jesus' day and came to be held by the Essenes and Pharisees and even permeated into the Gospel narratives.

"Far removed from the kingly, the Messianic hopes of the people and the supernatural vision of the Apocalypses, were the plain, direct,

A practical ideals of Israel's great ethical prophets." Here we note the ethical hope running through Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, declaring that Jahwah's purpose depended on the response of the people. The Kingdom of God was regarded as a natural growth. "They hoped and labored to see Israel living in full accord with the demand of justice, mercy, and ser
5 vice." This more than any other hope seemed more comprehensible and alone capable of realization.

^{1.} Kent - Makers and Teachers of Judaism - p. 306-309.

^{2.} Ibid - p. 307

^{3.} Ibid - p. 307

^{4.} Ibid - p. 309

^{5.} Ibid - p. 309

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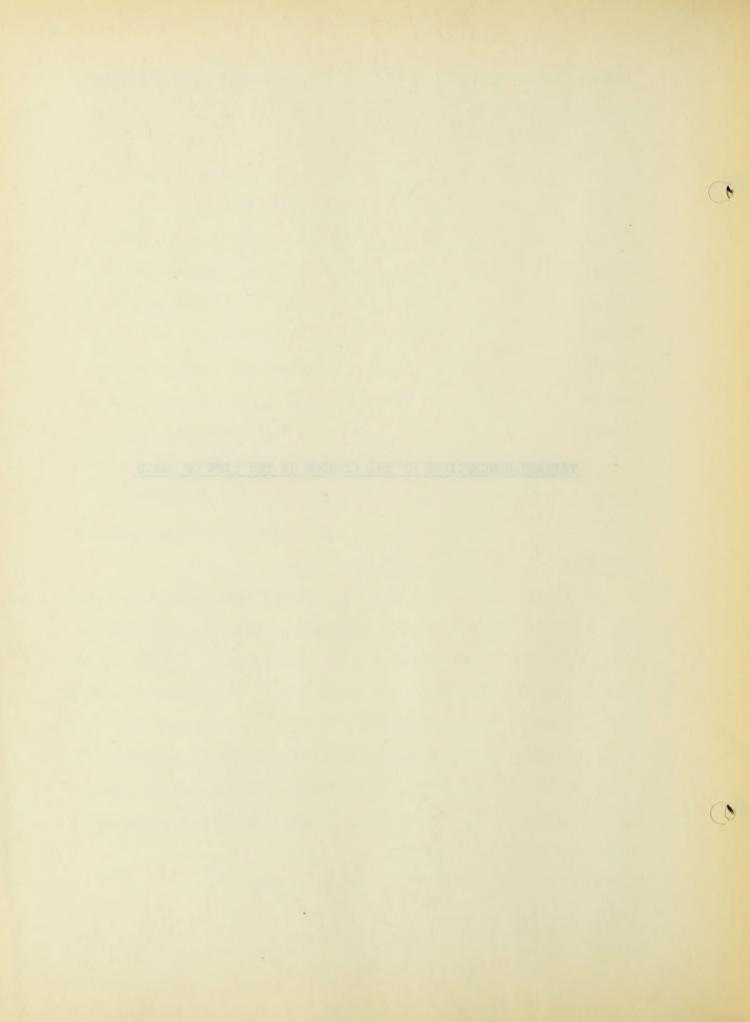
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VARYING CONCEPTIONS OF THE KINGDOM IN THE TIME OF JESUS



III. VARYING CONCEPTIONS OF THE KINGDOM IN THE TIME OF JESUS

A. The Current Conceptions of the Kingdom

At the beginning of the Christian era, the Jews were continuing to build their hopes on the foundation of the past. A long period of fruitless waiting for the fulfillment of prophetic promises had not destroyed confidence in the validity of those hopes. People were yet looking earnestly toward the future.

We saw in our previous study that three types of Messianic expectation prevailed. Judaism in the time of Jesus embodied all of them. But the two most influential were the politico-social types held by the Sadducees and Zealots, and the apocalyptic type held in the main by the Pharisees.

B. Conception of John the Baptist

It was at such a time that John the Baptist made his appearance, bearing a message of baptism and repentance. His message was one unlike that of the past, yet embodying within it, elements and hopes of the past.

On the one hand, John followed the hopes of the Apocalyptists as he found them. Believing the Kingdom to be near at hand, he looked for a time of wrath preceding it, to destroy the then present order and so bring judgment upon the righteous and the wicked. He looked for the immediate coming of a Messiah invested with Divine powers, who should baptize with "the Holy Spirit and with fire".

On the other hand, John followed the ethical prophets, believing that righteousness was the deepest demand. It was the condition of preparedness for the Kingdom with which he was concerned because it was to be the very life of the Kingdom itself. Legal and ceremonial conceptions of righteousness were being held by the scribes and Pharisees,

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The that confidences were the despite the entire that the confidence of the the that confidence of the the that confidence of the the that the the third of the the third of t

as the necessary preparation and condition of entrance for the expected Kingdom. It was against this proud self-righteousness that John raised his voice in stern proclamation of the need of repentance and forgiveness of sins.

Drawing thus from both the prophets and apocalyptists, John was able to combine with past hopes, a new element to meet the needs of the times. His message, therefore, introduced the necessity of baptism with water as a sign of repentance for remission of sins and renewal of spirit.

"Repent ye, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is He that was spoken of through Isaiah, the prophet, saying, 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ye ready the way of the Lord, Make his paths straight."

"I indeed baptize you in water to repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you in the Holy Spirit and in fire."2

His message had revived the terrors and warnings and predictions of the Old Testament prophecies and placed a new emphasis on repentance. It had taken on new ethical demands in its relationship with a Coming One, - a mightier One who should execute the work of judgment for the individual and usher in God's Kingdom.

The reception which John's preaching received among the legalists and leaders shows how little his ideas of righteousness, of religious conditions and character corresponded to the ideas and political views of the people themselves. He was regarded by the greater mass of people as one who failed to understand the wants and needs of his time, and it was only among a comparatively small circle

^{1.} Matt. 3:1-3

^{2.} Ibid. v.

^{3.} Luke 3:10-14

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C. The Eschatalogical and Apocalyptic Outlook of Jesus

Out from this small group of sympathizers, Jesus appeared.

Like John, he picked up the current expectation of his day. His statements are colored with apocalyptic influences and certain conceptions held can only be understood in the light of contemporary Jewish belief. Throughout his teaching, there are constant references to the calamities of the last days to come, to the circumstances of Judgment, and 2 to the dissolution of the present order and nature of society. He thus accepted the Kingdom idea as he found it and so used it. But as he called people to repentance and taught them, he developed his own larger and deeper understanding of the Kingdom life.

There is no question but that the mission of John the Baptist had a great influence on the life of Jesus. Jesus was attracted by

"the moral earnestness of his preaching; his repudiation of the external forms of righteousness and hopes of blessing, current among the Jews; his call to them to shelter themselves, by sincere repentance and good works from the impending judgments of God; and the emphasis he laid upon the baptism of the Spirit as the greatest gift the Messiah would bring."

To Jesus, John was therefore, more than a prophet.⁴ He was Elijah, who was expected to return at the commencement of the great closing scenes. With this expectation fulfilled in His own thinking, the way became clear for the full conviction and assertion of his own Messianic calling.

^{1.} Wendt - Teachings of Jesus, Vol. I, Ch. II, p. 89

^{2.} Scott - The Kingdom and the Messiah, Ch. V, p. 122

^{3.} Wendt - The Teachings of Jesus, Vol. I, p. 98

^{4.} Scott, E.F., The Kingdom and the Messiah, Ch. 3, p. 85.

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THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE PARABLES

A. The Method of Procedure

There can be no question that the Judaistic outlook as described in the preceding pages had its bearing upon the thought and life of Jesus. For one thing, he expected the speedy advent of the Kingdom.

He regarded the coming as sudden and surprising:

"For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the Ark, and they knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of Man. Then shall two men be in the field; one is taken, and one is left; two women shall be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left."

He expected it to be the work of God through the Son of Man. And he looked for the solution of world life in the Kingdom.

It is in the light of this eschatological and apocalyptical outlook that we must read and interpret the parables. As stated before, the purpose of this paper is a limited one, - not to trace the entire growth of Jesus' ideal of the Kingdom, but to canvass the parables only, and to formulate what they embody of his grasp of the Kingdom ideal.

The parables as used by Jesus are presented as word-pictures given for the purpose of bringing out a specific underlying truth.

They enable him to present truth in a veiled way and yet provoke thought on the part of those eager to understand.

1. Principles of Analysis and Interpretation

In our analysis of the parables then, we shall proceed as follows:

^{1.} Matt. 24:29-31, 34-39; 10:23; Mark 13:24-27, 30-33.

^{2.} Matt. 24:38-41

^{3.} Mark 4:10-12.

Bosworth - Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 190.

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- (1) We shall note the occasion under which and the purpose for which each parable was spoken.
- (2) We shall seek to understand the allusions contained in the parables themselves.
- (3) We shall seek to discover and direct the perhaps obvious meaning that each parable must have had for those who heard it.
- (4) We shall then try to grasp the truth contained in the parable in its bearing upon the Kingdom expectation of the day.

B. Classification

Omitting the little germ parables there are in all twentythree parables which we must analyze. Classifying them under four headings, they are as follows:

1. Parables on the Nature of the Kingdom

- a. The parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-53; (19-23) (Mark 4:1-9; (14-25) (Luke 8:4-18; 16-17)
- b. The parable of the Seed growing secretly (Mark 4:26-29
- c. The parable of the Tares Matthew 13:24-30
- d. The parable of the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:32 (Luke 13:18-19 (Mark 4:30-32
- e. The parable of the Leaven (Matthew 13:33 (Luke 13:20-21
- f. The parable of the Hidden
 Treasure (Matthew 13:44
- g. The parable of the Pearl of Great Price - (Matthew 13:45-46
- h. The parable of the Drag-net (Matthew 13:47-48

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2. Parables on Readiness for the Kingdom

- a. The parable of the cruel Servant Matthew 18:23-35
- b. The parable of the Householder and Laborer (Matthew 20:1-16
- c. The parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (Matthew 21:33-41)
- d. The parable of the Wedding
 Feast or the parable of
 the Great Supper (Matthew 22:1-14
 (Luke 14:16-24
- e. The parable of the Ten
 Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13
- f. The parable of the Talents
 and the Pounds (Matthew 25:14-30
 (Luke 19:11-28

3. The Parables on the Individual and the Kingdom

- a. The parable of the Lost
 Sheep (Matthew 18:12-14
 (Luke 15:1-18
- b. The parable of the Lost Coin- (Luke 15:8-10
- c. The parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-32

4. The Parables on the Social Aspects of the Kingdom

- a. The parable of the Good
 Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)
- b. The parable of the Unjust
 Steward (Luke 16:1-12
- c. The parable of Dives and
 Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31
- d. The parable of the Publican and Sinner (Luke 18:9-14
- e. The parable of the Rich Young
 Ruler (Luke 18:18-30)
- f. The parable of the Debtors (Matthew 18:23-35
- g. The parable of the Last

 Judgment (Matthew 25:31-46)

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5. The Apocalyptic Aspects

- a. The Judgment
- b. The separation of good from the evil.
- c. Punishment for the wicked
- d. The appearance of the Son of Man
- e. The unexpected coming of the Kingdom
- f. All nations to be called to share in the judgment
 - g. God as a possible judge
 - h. The entrance of the righteous into the prepared Kingdom.

C. Interpretation of the Kingdom Ideal in the Parables

1. The Parables on the Nature of the Kingdom

According to Mark's gospel, the parable of the Sower, the parable of the Seed growing secretly, and the parable of the Mustard Seed were spoken when Jesus had been teaching throughout Galilee for a considerable time. They were spoken just after the crisis in his conflict with the scribes who condemned him for being in league with Beelzebub, the prince of devils, and just before he was to carry out his teaching campaign with the Twelve. These parables, we assume, with others found in Matthew and Luke, estimate the significance of his Galilean campaign of preparation for the coming Kingdom.

Jesus was teaching by the seaside. Multitudes had come to hear him. As on former occasions he entered into a boat, pushed out a bit from shore and taught them in parables. The first parable, that of the Sower, is allegorical in nature. It described a Galilean farmer's varied experience with different parts of the field - the different soils found therein.

"Harken: Behold, the sower went forth to sow; and it came to pass, as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside, and the

¹⁻ Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 190.

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birds came and devoured it. And other fell in the rocky ground, where it had not much earth; and straightway it sprang up, because it had no deepness of earth; and when the sun was risen, was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And others fell among the thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And others fell on good ground, and yielded fruit growing up and increasing; and brought forth thirty-fold and sixty-fold and a hundred-fold."

Seeing that the disciples had failed to get the full meaning of the parable, Jesus explained a bit more carefully in private. He had likened the four kinds of soil to the kind of men and women he had found as he presented the life people must be ready to live in order to be prepared for the coming Kingdom. As in every field there is the hardened soil; there is the rocky soil; there are thin layers of good soil; there is the deep rich soil. So among people, there were those whose wouls were hardened to the message; there were those who listened and received the message with joy, but had no will to follow; there were those who heard, but because of material desires failed to measure up; and there were those who heard, received and served others, with fruitful lives.

Jesus' contacts had been with people of many and various occupations and with the scribes and their conception of righteousness.

He had been in and seen the walks of life; he had seen the evils and the greed and hatreds of the masses; he understood their future hopes.

He had come to realize that the coming Kingdom of his hopes rested on the human response which should come from these people with whom he was engaged. He, therefore, saw the need of emphasizing in this parable, certain qualities necessary for the righteousness which he stood for - those of attention, sincerity, obedience. There must be the desire and willingness to hear; there must be sincerity, for such a message can only be

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received in honesty and goodness; and there must be obedience to the truth received.

According to eschatological writers on the life of Christ, this parable and others of this group (the Seed growing secretly, the Mustard Seed, and the Leaven) are taken as hidden or secret parables, intended to suggest to disciples alone that the Kingdom could be expected even with the closing of that harvest.

What seems to be more significant, however, is the fact that

Jesus emunciated in these parables, the dependence of the Kingdom

upon the voluntary responsiveness of the people. People were then

entering upon the life of the Kingdom in proportion as they received

and obeyed the truth they heard.

"Another parable in which Jesus expresses something of the estimate of what he has been doing throughout Galilee is the parable of the crop proceeding steadily toward harvest without further attention from the sower."

"And he said, So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed upon the earth; and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring up and grow, he knoweth not how. The earth beareth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is ripe, straightway he putteth forth the sickle, because the harvest is come." 3

Here the farmer has merely scattered his seed without further thought. In time the crop proceeds steadily toward harvest, "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." So Jesus has drawn his comparison of the Kingdom of heaven with the slow, gradual growth of the grain, growing quietly and surely according to natural laws till the harvest is ready. Jesus is confident that once his

^{1.} Warschauer - The Historical Life of Christ - p. 83

^{2.} Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 194

^{3.} Mark 4:26-29

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message is given, the Kingdom will grow by its own forces, - that he in cooperation with his Father - was working with the same irresistible forces that brought crops to harvest.

A third secret parable is that of the Mustard Seed, the smallest of all the garden seeds.

"And he said, How shall we liken the Kingdom of God? Or in what parable shall we set it forth? It is like a grain of mustard seed which when it is sown upon the earth, though it be less than all the seeds that are upon the earth, yet, when it is sown, groweth up, and becometh greater than all the herbs, and putteth out great branches; so that the birds of the heaven can lodge upon the shadow thereof."

In likening the Kingdom of heaven to the growth of the mustard seed, there is the emphasis placed upon the small beginning resulting in a great ending. As the mustard seed grows gradually into a plant greater than all the herbs, so the Kingdom of heaven shall grow from the small unrecognized and unorganized movement of Jesus into a forceful empire.

The parable of the Leaven hidden away in three measures of meal likewise emphasizes the contrast between the small beginning and the great ending.

"The Kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till it was all leavened."2

But the parable of the leaven does more than merely contrast the small beginning and great ending; it shows the transformation resulting from a small influence. "The little movement now in progress must issue in the Kingdom of God - there is the mystery."

The parable of the tares throws out a hint of the eschatological and apocalyptic influence and "possibly reflects an earlier struggle

^{1.} Mark 4:30-32; Matthew 13:32; Luke 13:18-19

^{2.} Matthew 13:33

^{3.} Warschauer - Historical Life of Christ - p. 84

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in the thinking of Jesus."

"The Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. But when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

And the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? When then hath it tares? And he said unto them, An enemy hath done this, And the servants say unto him, will thou then that we go and gather them up? But he saith nay, lest haply while ye gather up the tares, ye root up the wheat with them. Let them both grow together until the harvest. And in the time of the harvest, I will say to the reapers, Gather up first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn."

Here again Jesus had drawn his illustration from seed-time and harvest - a time which was so much a part of the life of the people. The farmer on the discovery of the tares, permitted them to grow, lest their uprooting should mean the waste of the good grain. Both were to grow until the harvest and the cutting of grain and then the separation could be safely made. So it shall be in the preparation to be made for the coming Kingdom. The evil as well as the good forces will thrive side by side and be at work in society. Separation of these forces shall come only at the advent of the Kingdom.

"The Son of Man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

It would seem from this last statement in Matthew that God himself shall be the one who shall ultimately separate the tares from the good grain. It may stand as a prediction of the future appearance of the Son of Man at the final Judgment.

^{1.} Kent - Life and Teachings of Jesus p. 161

^{2.} Matthew 13:24-30

^{3.} Matthew 13:41-43

^{4.} Kent - The Life and Teachings of Jesus p. 162

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The parables of the Hidden Treasure and the costly Pearl point out the supreme value of the Kingdom.

"The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

"Again the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls; and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

Jesus draws attention to individuals who have given all their possessions for something greater. In the one case, the man sold everything that he might purchase the field in which there was a hidden treasure. In the other case the merchant sold all his pearls in order to buy the one wondrous and most precious of all pearls. In the one case the treasure is found; in the other case, it is sought. In likening the Kingdom of heaven to the hidden treasure and the pearl, Jesus points out the supreme value and importance of the life of the Kingdom. Nothing that people owned or sought was comparable to it. All else could be forsaken for it and the gain be eternal.

The parable of the Drag-net carries as did the parable of the Tares, an apocalyptic emphasis.

"Again the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away."

It is a picture of every-day life. As the fishermen wait for their catch till evening and then separate the good fish from the worthless ones, so it shall be when Judgment Day appears: The Angels of the Son of Man shall separate the righteous from the wicked and cause them to be cast into everlasting punishment.

^{1.} Matthew 13:44.45

^{2.} Matthew 13:47-48

^{3.} Matthew 13:41

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2. The Parables on the Readiness for the Kingdom

The conflicts between Jesus and the scribes grew more intense in the days which followed. It was not enough that the people should understand his view of the nature of the coming Kingdom; it was necessary as well that they make the preparation for the Kingdom, a part of themselves and their social structure. Jesus' standards for right living, drawn out of his own religious experience and his relationship with God, were clashing constantly with the ceremonial and legal standards of righteousness of the scribes. If the righteousness which he stood for could be no less than the "output in action of a sincere and overflowing heart - a heart full of love to God and therefore necessarily full of love to men", - it must embody deeper issues than the righteousness of the scribes. It must be a matter of the heart, for therein does one take up his life with purpose and direction.

So, also, Jesus spoke in parables concerning the readiness of the Kingdom. He had passed through another great crisis, - the transfiguration. It had been a time of decision as to what he should do, and where he should go to further promote his work in the interest of the coming Kingdom. In Galilee, the multitudes who had once listened to him were turning away and his enemies were conspiring against him. To depart from his own people to Gentile lands would be in effect to give up his mission. The Kingdom of his ideal must not be built on any foundation other than that of his own people, and if going to Jerusalem meant death, for the sake of the Kingdom, he would face it. That would be his Father's will and purpose.

^{1.} Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 183

^{2.} Rall - The Life of Jesus - p. 107-114

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^{1.} Post of - The life of dean - 2. Moralla

Descending the Mount of Transfiguration, he made his way south-ward toward Judea and Jerusalem. At Capernaum, the disciples brought questions to him concerning greatness in this Kingdom of heaven and concerning Peter's question on forgiveness, "Lord how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?" That he might enforce and illustrate his reply "until seventy times seven," Jesus uttered the parable on forgiveness, known as the parable of the Cruel Servant.

"Therefore is the Kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would make a reckoning with his servants, and when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not wherewith to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children and all that he had and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down and worshipped him, saying. Lord have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And the lord of that servant being moved with compassion, released him and forgave him the debt. But that servant went out and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him a hundred pence; and he laid hold on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay what thou owest. So his fellow-servant fell down and besought him, saying, Have patience with me and I will pay thee. And he would not; but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay that which was due. So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were exceeding sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord called unto him and saith to him, Thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou besoughtest me; shouldst not thou also have had mercy on thy fellow-servant, even as I had mercy on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due. So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you, if ye forgive not every one his brother from your hearts."

on forgiveness - a new spirit of forgiveness. Here were two servants, both in debt; in the one case the debt is ten thousand talents, and "nothing wherewith to pay"; and in the other "an hundred pence" and only time required to insure full payment. In the case of the former, according to the cruel provision of the time, the master ordered the law to take its course and sell the man and family into slavery. When

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the man begged for mercy, the master had pity and remitted the whole debt. But the servant who had obtained mercy failed to be merciful to the one who owed him but one hundred pence. Jesus therefore held up to scorn and condemnation the hard and unforgiving spirit of men. In the same manner, as people forgive their fellow-men, would God forgive and deal with them. If they fail to fulfil such a duty, they have rendered themselves unworthy of God's grace. God's forgiveness could be none other than forgiveness in the hearts of men as well as forgiveness for men.

After this discussion, Jesus again took up his journey into the borders of Judea beyond the Jordan. The multitudes still followed him. Pharisees came to him with catch questions seeking some opening whereby they might have reason to take him before Jerusalem authorities. Some concern had developed regarding the relation of riches to the eternal life in the kingdom and as an outgrowth of the rich young ruler's question and the discussion following, Jesus likened the Kingdom of heaven unto the parable of the Householder and Laborers.

"For the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers unto his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing in the marketplace idle; and to them he said, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour, he went out and found others standing; and he saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day, idle? They say unto him, because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard. And when even was come, the Lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers and pay them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. And when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received every man a penny. And when they received it, they murmured against the householder, saying, These last have spent but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have born the burden of the day, and the scorching heat. But he answered and

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said to one of them, Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take up that which is thine, and go thy way; it is my will to give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? or is thine eye evil, because I am good. So the last shall be first, and the first last."

The story is one taken out of the lives of workmen with whom Jesus had much to do. The householder is a respectable rich man. He has shown sympathy for the unemployed and has gone out, himself, into the market places and has gathered the unfortunate ones in even unto the last hour of the day. The question of pay arises only when the laborers leave, for each receives the same wage.

The householder, herein, deals with his laborers on the basis of mercy and the needs of the workmen. He is not concerned with justice of time. So in like manner shall God deal with his people. All classes shall appear for entrance into the Kingdom. There shall be the penitent publicans and sinners and harlots; there shall be the scribes and rulers and the rich. But God shall not simply pay; He shall deal accordingly to his grace and the spirit in which people serve and live. In this parable it would seem that Jesus swept away the whole religion of law and labor, of earning and getting. People are being invited to prepare and enter the Kingdom, but those who first go in shall be rather those of the right spirit and not those who have earned special privileges.

Jesus had now entered Jerusalem to attend the feast of the Passover. He had been hailed and welcomed as a popular leader by the multitudes, who, likewise, had come to attend the feast. But that was not all which was to happen, for he must face the Jerusalem scribes and some of them he had already faced in Galilee, when he was accused of allying himself with Satan. The scribes had become bitter against him 1. Matthew 20:1-16

^{2.} Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 287

^{3.} Rall - The Teachings of Jesus - p. 37

^{4.} Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus p. 308 ff.

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And again, Jesus' entrance into the temple, his action and public speeches and his right to cast out commerce stirred the whole city.

Authorities took it upon themselves to question his right. "By what authority dost thou these things?" ----Antagonistic feelings were running strong, and little more could be done for he carried the sympathy of the multitudes. Jesus tactfully veiled his answer in parables which seemed to the Jewish leaders to carry even greater condemnation for them.

"But what think ye? A man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son go work today in the vineyard. And he answered and said, I will not; but afterward, he repented himself, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and went not. Whether of the twain did the will of his father? They say, the first.

"Jesus saith unto them, verily I say unto you, that the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and harlots believed him; and ye when ye saw it, did not even prepent yourselves afterward, that ye might believe him."

Inference herein, is drawn that the sinners and publicans and harlots were like the first son who repented and desired to share the Kingdom once their eyes and hearts were open to righteousness. The scribes and pharisees and all those holding to legal and ceremonial righteousness were as the second son, for they understood, yet deliberately refused to accept.

Jesus' keen insight made another answer possible by way of explanation in the form of the parable of the Vineyard.

"There was a man that was a householder which planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country.

"And when the season of the fruits drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, to receive his fruits, And the

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"But afterward he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But the husbandmen when they saw the son, said among themselves, This is the heir; come let us kill him, and take his inheritance. And they took him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard, and killed him.

"When therefore the Lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will let out the vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons."

Here was a householder who spent sums of money on his vineyard. He built a wall around it, set out vines, equipped it with a
wine press and built a tower in it for its protection. On leaving the
country he rented it out. But the renters took advantage, first beating
and killing the servants of the owner who were sent to collect, and later
killing the heir, himself, that they might have full possession. The
owner would then return and give over his vineyard to others.

In following Matthew, we find that the parable places a slightly new emphasis on the coming Kingdom. As the householder holds authority or rule over his vineyard and deals with his men in the measure of response and fruits rendered, so likewise God shall take His Kingdom and His people Israel, and give it to a nation bringing forth fruit - one to which all peoples may be annexed. It would seem that this parable carries over a bit of the old prophetic warning in Isaiah.

Some have interpreted this to mean that the opportunity had first come to the Jews and they in their whole social structure were failing to see the need of a change let alone desiring it. Yet it hardly seems as if Jesus could have meant the entire Jewish nation for he had been

^{1.} Matthew 21:33-44; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 22:9-19

^{2.} Warschauer - Historical Life of Jesus - p. 266

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calling multitudes of his people to repentance in the preparation of the Kingdom of God. "The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." It would seem, therefore, that it was official or authoritative Judaism that he had in mind rather than the rank and file of the Jewish people. It would seem, too, that the parable was directed specifically against the official custodian of Israel's religion.

Immediately following this discourse which had only made the situation more intense among the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus enunciated the parable of the Wedding Feast.

"The Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which made a marriage feast for his son, and sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the marriage feast; And they would not come. Again he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them that are bidden, Behold, I have made ready my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come to the marriage feast.

"But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise; and the rest laid hold on his servants, and entreated them shamefully, and killed them. But the king was wroth; and sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned their city.

"Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they that were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore unto the partings of the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage feast. And those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good; and the wedding was filled with guests.

"But when the king came in to behold the guests, he saw there was a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, Friend, how comest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."

Much the same story is given in Luke as in Matthew, though

Luke has assigned it to the Samaritan ministry. Common features are

found in both versions, except that Matthew makes the wedding that of

^{1.} Matthew 21:31b

^{2.} Matthew 22:1-14

^{3.} Warschauer - The Historical Life of Christ - p. 266

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extended. There is the refusal of the invited guests, the annoyance of the host and further invitation extended to the crowd of the streets. The invited guests have been indifferent and have made light of the occasion, only to go the way of their interests; others have attacked the king's servants shamefully and cruelly; while the king himself sent out armies to destroy and murder inhabitants and ruin the city. Guests were brought in from highways and byways that the house might be filled. Any found in unsuitable dress for such an occasion were ordered to be bound hand and foot and cast in outer darkness where weeping and gnashing of teeth should be heard.

So Jesus likens the Kingdom of heaven to such a situation.

The Jews had been given the invitation, but were doing the same foolish thing as given in the parable, and while they were refusing, the outcasts, sinners, and publicans, were all given the invitation and were accepting it gladly.

There possibly is a hint of retrospective prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem in the statement, "But the king was wroth and sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned their city."

Sufferings in outer darkness and punishment of weeping and gnashing of teeth, reflect apocalyptic influences. The authorities must have realized that they were being attacked by Jesus. They had no adequate answer for him nor could they attack him because of his hearers.

Jesus left the temple and on his way stopped at the Mount of Olives. Here he discussed with his disciples privately some of the things concerning the future. They had questioned "when shall these things be?", but had failed to understand and to take literally what

^{1.} Warschauer - The Historical Life of Christ - p. 266 (Matt. 22:7.)

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he had been saying. His message of "watchfulness" - as further presented in the parable of the Ten Virgins, contains a warning to indifferent and careless followers and disciples.

"Then shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were foolish, and five were wise. For the foolish when they took their lamps, took no oil with them; but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there is a cry, Behold the Bridegroom! Come ye forth to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, Peradventure, there will not be enough for us and you; go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went away to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage feast; and the door was shut. Afterward come also, the other virgins saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not.

"Watch therefore for ye know not the day nor the hour."

Jesus has previously spoken of the coming of the "Son of Man."

It would seem that he has definitely understood his relationship to

the "Son of Man" and the Kingdom. Preparation, - watchfulness
readiness for the Kingdom become the watchwords in the parable. Herein

are persons described with the responsibilities of watching for the

bridegroom's uncertain arrival. They had gone out to some appointed

spot to meet him. Some had not made sufficient preparation and at

the hour of arrival found it too late to do more. They were, therefore,

shut out from the wedding supper.

As with the unprepared virgins, so shall it be with many when the Son of Man comes and the Kingdom appears. Those who wait in readiness shall enter; those who fail to be prepared shall find the door closed against them.

^{1.} Matthew 25:1-13

^{2.} Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 343

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There is something of the same element in the parable which follows in the same discourse with that of the Ten Virgins.

"For it is as when a man going into another country, called his own servants and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his several ability; and he went on his journey.

"Straightway he that received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents. In like manner, he also that received the two, gained other two. But he that received the one, went away and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

"Now after a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and maketh a reckoning with them. And he that receive the five talents came and brought other five talents, saying Lord, thou deliverest unto me five talents; lo, I have gained other five talents. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

"And he also that received the two talents came and said, Lord thou deliverest unto me two talents; lo, I have gained other two talents. His lord said unto him, Well done good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

"And he also that had received one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter; and I was afraid and went away and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, thou hast thine own. But his lord answered and said unto him, thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I did not scatter; thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the bankers, and at my coming, I should have received back mine own interest; Take ye away, therefore, the talent from him, and give it unto him that hath the ten talents.

"For unto everyone that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away.

"And cast ye out the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth."

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The man in going into the far country has given to each servant a portion of his goods to use till he shall return, and on his return, he has praised each and placed in greater trust accordingly as he has used that which lay in his possession. So Jesus has likened the Kingdom of heaven to this situation. Individuals shall be granted certain endowments and trusts and opportunities for service in the necessary preparation for judgment. When the Kingdom appears and the Lord shall return, he shall award each accordingly in the measure of his use of those trusts. If one has failed to measure up, the opportunities for service shall be lost. Watchfulness and faithfulness as herein emphasized become the means for successful preparation. Punishment shall come only to those who fail to measure up to their opportunities.

Luke's parable of the Pounds - runs parallel with Matthew's version and possibly was taken from the same source. The same thought is carried throughout except that of eternal punishment which is omitted. It is likewise an illustration showing necessary preparation on the part of people for the Judgment and the coming Kingdom.

3. The Parables on The Individual and the Kingdom

In Jesus' interpretation of this Kingdom, he has given a definite place to the value of individuals who shall make up the Kingdom. His own sense of Sonship and the existing relationship between himself and his Father has revealed to him the worth of each to the Father.

Three of the parables - The Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and the Lost Son, - express most vividly God's concern for the individual. Each is a picture of one truth, yet each emphasizes one distinct element of that truth.

^{1.} Luke 19:11-28

^{2.} Bosworth - The Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 345

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Jesus, enroute for Jerusalem, found his statements clashing constantly with those of the scribes and Pharisees. He had criticized their deeds publicly; he had been criticized as having allied himself with Satan; he had been criticized for failing to observe the customary laws of righteousness, both in eating and healing on the Sabbath day; and he had been criticized, too, for having associated with publicans and sinners.

At such a time when outcasts were drawn to him and when the Pharisees and scribes were murmuring against him, Jesus spake unto them, -

"What man of you having a hundred sheep and having lost one of them, doth not leave the ninety-and-nine in the wilderness and go after that which was lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing, And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and his neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you that even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine righteous persons which need no repentance."

"Or what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece doth not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth together her friends and her neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost. Even so, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth."

"And he said, a certain man had two sons; and the younger of them, said to his father, Father give me the portion of thy substance that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country; and there he wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that country; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine; and he would fain have been filled with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him. But when he came unto himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight; I

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am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto him. Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight; I am no more worthy to be called thy son. But the father said to his servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf. and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. And they began to be merry. Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called to him one of the servants and inquired what these things might be. And he said unto him. thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf. because he hath received him safe and sound. But he was angry and would not go in; and his father came out and intreated him; But he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, and I never transgressed a commandment of thine; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends, but when this thy son came, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou killest for him the fatted calf. And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that is mine is thine. But it was meet to make merry and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost and is found."1

In these parables so closely linked together, there is the common truth that God is concerned about every individual and seeks to recover any who have turned away as does the shepherd, or the woman with the lost coin, and will receive them as graciously as did the father whose repentant son returned for forgiveness. God in his love cares for the salvation of the smallest individual member who shall enter His Kingdom just as the owner of sheep does not permit a single one of his sheep to be lost.

In the parable of the lost coin, the thing sought for is returned; in the parable of the Lost Son, it is a voluntary and penitent return. Jesus has in the most beautiful and clearest way, given expression to the contrast of God as Father and the legal understanding

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of relations which the Jews thought should exist between God and man.

Herein is exhibited the grace of God promised to the sinner on condition of his penitent return as the only natural procedure of a God as Father.

Jesus was not concerned with that which supposes that God could only award righteous actions by a strictly equivalent recompense and punish all sin by withholding salvation.

4. The Parables on the Social Aspects of the Kingdom.

"The ideal social state which Jesus describes as the Kingdom of God, was a commonwealth in which all men were united and governed by a commanding love both for God and their neighbors."2

Jesus did not set forth a program; he emphasized certain principles and tried to wipe out evil social conditions by putting the right ideals into the minds of men that they might share the responsibility and correct them. It was his desire to perfect society through the perfection of the individual and this could come only through an acceptance of his standards of righteousness and love in its highest and best sense on the part of individuals.

Jesus had now departed from Galilean borders into the country of Samaria on his way to Jerusalem. There was no welcome within its borders for him, being a Jew, and he found it necessary to journey on to another village. A certain lawyer questioned him concerning eternal life, desiring to know what he might do to inherit it. Jesus had referred him to the statement of the law which demands loving God with all the heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and his neighbor as himself. But the lawyer had failed to understand who his neighbor might be. Jesus therefore illustrated his principle that neighbor love leads to

^{1.} Wendt - The Teachings of Jesus - Vol. 1, p. 197-198

^{2.} Kent - Life and Teachings of Jesus - p. 191

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the life of the coming Kingdom by the parable of the kindly Samaritan.

"A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, which both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance a certain priest was going down that way; and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. And in like manner a Levite also, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan as he journeyed came where he was; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his beast and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back, will repay thee. Which of these three thinkest thou, proved neighbor unto him that fell among the robbers? And he said, he that showed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, go do thou likewise."1

Jesus has taken as the hero of his story, a merciful Samaritan, one who was a member of the most hated race of the Jews, and illustrated to the lawyer how the Samaritan proved neighbor and "fellow Jew" - to one of a hostile race when the professional religionists of his own nation had left him to his fate. The Samaritan in love of heart saw the need of the stranger, bound up the wounds and cared for him. In this simple way, Jesus has stressed that any one to whom another may give of himself in love and unselfish service, becomes a neighbor. It must not be narrowed down to that of an Israelite only. It must be practiced among all men first if it is to be taken into the Kingdom.

In like manner must a friendly spirit be shown in monetary d dealings. In the parable of the Steward, Jesus told his disciples:

"There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he was wasting his goods. And he called him and said unto him, What is this that I hear of thee? Render the account of thy stewardship; for thou canst be no longer steward. And the steward said within himself, What shall I do, see-

^{1.} Luke 10:25-37

^{2.} Warschauer - The Historical Life of Christ - p. 277-278

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ing that my lord taketh away the stewardship from me? I have not strength to dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship they may receive me into their houses. And calling to him each one of his lord's debtors, he said to the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, take thy bond and sit down quickly and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, a hundred measures of wheat. He said unto him, Take thy bond and write, fourscore. And his lord commended the unrighteous steward because he had done wisely; for the sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of light. And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles; He that is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much, and he that is unrighteous in a very little is unrighteous in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another's who will give you that which is your own?"1

Here was a man who knew how to make friends by the use of his position and money. He had given help to others that he might therein have a place to which to turn if there should be need of it. His motive may have been selfish, yet the use to which he put his money was made in a friendly way. Jesus must have emphasized herein to his disciples that God will trust one with the higher things which characterize the life of the Kingdom in the measure that one is faithful in the little things among his fellowmen. It further emphasized the need for being as efficient in the affairs of the Kingdom as the steward was in his own selfish interests.

"Now there was a certain rich man and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day; and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea even the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died and that he was carried

^{1.} Luke 16:1-12

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away by the angels in Abraham's bosom; and the rich man also died, and was buried. And in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said. Father Abraham have mercy on me and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things, and Lazarus in like manner, evil things; but now here he is comforted, and thou art in anguish. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they which would pass from hence to you may not be able, and none may cross over from thence to us. And he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house; for I have five brethern; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. But Abraham saith, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham; but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded if one rise from the dead."1

Jesus has continued his discourse on riches and the use of money. Here is a picture of a man who has refused to use his money in friendly relief of a sick beggar at his gate. The beggar has asked for but little. The dogs were even more friendly to him than their owner. The story also pictures the two men after death and the awards and punishments awaiting each. The beggar's soul has found a place in heaven, while the rich man must suffer torment.

Jesus, again, points out that the kind of righteousness necessary in the relationship of individual to individual and constituting readiness for the Kingdom, is that of love and unselfish service - good will and friendliness.

The parable of the Publican and Sinner points out how Jesus classifies people according to attitudes taken toward each other and

^{1.} Luke 16:19-31

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to God.

"And he spake also this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and set all others at nought; Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I get. But the publican standing afar off would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I say unto you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone that exalteth himself shall be humbled; but he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Here the Pharisee saw his own merits and praised himself and his uprightness publically. The publican on the other hand saw only his need and humbly opened the door of his heart to God in prayer. It is humility and repentance which must spring from the righteousness within one's life. Jesus, again, places the attitude and humility of the publican and those of his class as a part of righteousness necessary for accepting and sharing the Kingdom while the attitude of the Pharisees as pillars of respectability and piety, remained unmoved and indifferent toward the Kingdom.

The parable of the Rich Young Ruler holds a place in each of the Synoptics. 2 Jesus has given it during his last journey to Jerusalem, following his discourse on the value of individuals and the place of children. A rich young man has listened to Jesus' teachings and seems concerned as to what he as an individual might do to share in the coming Kingdom.

"And as he was going forth into the way, there ran one to him and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

^{1.} Luke 18:9-14

^{2.} Matthew 19:16-23; Mark 10:17-22; Juke 18:18-24

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"And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, do not commit adultery, Do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honor thy father and mother.

"And he said unto him, Master all these things have I observed from my youth. And Jesus looking upon him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest; go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and thou shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.

"But his countenance fell at the saying, and he went away sorrowful; for he was one that had great possessions."

The young man had apparently been stirred by Jesus' message. He felt the impulse and desire to serve. Jesus recognized his sincerity and asked only that he give up his wealth and business to help the poor and needy, that he might better let the needs of others appeal to him more than his own. It meant surrendering privileges that others might share in them. It was for the sake of the giver that Jesus so emphatically emphasized "giving" - that he might practice the righteousness so needed in readiness for the Kingdom. It was, too, this reciprocal friendship which would help men to bear each other's burdens - and carry them beyond the bounds of race feelings into friendly associations.

The young man failed to respond and went away sorrowful.

Jesus did not renounce property and riches except as they stood in the way of the larger and fuller life. The disciples were amazed and showed desire for explanation. Jesus therefore replied, "Children how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."

The parable of the Debtors, which has been mentioned before, emphasizes the social aspect of the Kingdom as well as readiness for

^{1.} Mark 10:17-22

^{2.} Mark 10:24

^{3.} Matthew 18:23-35

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it. The element of forgiveness and repentance in the heart as a part of righteousness and right relations between individuals is emphasized by Jesus. As men so deal with each other, will God so deal with them.

The discourse on the Last Judgment falls not so definitely under the classes of general parable or allegory; it is rather an apocalyptic parable - or a pictorial representation of the future embodying parabolic characteristics.

"But when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all the nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or athirst and gave thee drink? and when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? and when saw we thee sick or in prison, and came unto thee? and the king shall answer and say unto them, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least ye did it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand. Depart from me ye cursed, into eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink. I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison and ye visited me not, Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them saying, verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life."1

The test which Jesus sets up here for final judgment is the loving service of men rather than ceremonial righteousness. All the

^{1.} Matthew 25:31-46

^{2.} Ibid

^{3.} Rall, H.F. - Teachings of Jesus - p. 174

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nations shall appear for this Judgment and take separation as sheep from the goats. In the measure of preparation for the Kingdom, in the measure of loving service rendered to those who are strangers, to those who are ill, and poverty stricken, shall those who come up for judgment be judged and granted life in the Kingdom, for such a service rendered unto the needy is a service unto God.

5. The Apocalyptic Aspects of the Kingdom.

It was during the last days of Jesus' ministry that the parables concerning the readiness for the kingdom and the right relationship between individuals, fall. Jesus' thoughts were on the approaching future and his parables are flooded with hints and illustrations concerning it.

Over and over again there is the warning of a coming Judgment. The parable of the Tares and the Drag-net infer the coming of a Judgment but definitely stress the separation of the good and evil, with punishment for the evil. The parable of the vineyard shows a bit of the prophetic influence as well as the apocalyptic. It would seem that Matthew's version points to Israel as being God's chosen nation to first prepare for the Kingdom, but that carelessness and indifference made it necessary for God to punish Israel by giving over the privileges and Kingdom to another or other nations seeking it and its righteousness. There is likewise a hint of an heir being sent of God to care for such a Kingdom.

The parable of the Wedding Feast carries the idea of judgment and punishment. There was the order from authority that the ones not properly dressed should be bound hand and foot and cast into outer darkness with others who were in suffering - weeping and gnashing teeth. The

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Jews who had been invited to enter the Kingdom should find themselves cast out at the Judgment.

A new factor is introduced in the parable of the Ten Virgins. There is the emphasis upon watchfulness and waiting for the bridegroom as one who shall usher in the coming Kingdom. Those who wait in readiness shall enter with him. There is something of the same emphasis given in the parable of the Talents - When the owner of the talents returns, he shall deal with each according to the faithfulness and service rendered. There is ever the expectant hope that the owner shall return; there is emphasis on readiness, on faithfulness and watchfulness; there is likewise the emphasis on punishment and suffering for those who fail to measure up to the task and trust.

The account of the last Judgment pictures more vividly, if we can assume that it is a part of the original version, the happenings as expected. A Son of Man shall appear in his glory with angels. All nations shall be gathered before him for judgment and there shall be a final separation - as sheep from the goats. The righteous shall be permitted to enter the Kingdom already prepared - into eternal life - because of preparation and service rendered in readiness; the wicked shall be cast into eternal punishment.

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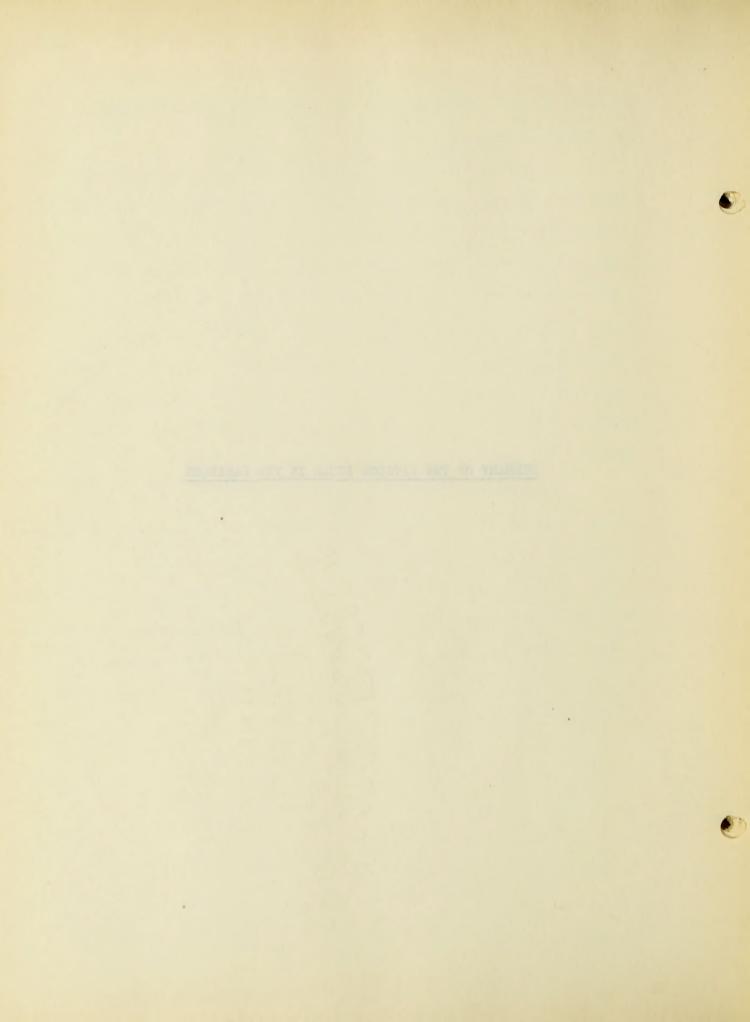
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SUMMARY OF THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE PARABLES



6. Summary of the Kingdom Ideal in the Parables.

The remarkable feature of all these parables in contradistinction to the decidely apocalyptic parables is the fact that
the Kingdom is conceived of as already growing toward its consummation
at the coming of the Son of Man. It is as if Jesus discovered, as he
prepared people for the Kingdom, that in doing so, he was even then
advancing its very life. He not only wanted them to understand his
interpretation of the nature of the coming Kingdom in the light of all
that had come to him, but he desired as well that they should understand the preparation necessary for the life in that Kingdom.

The emunciation of each parable was due to a rising situation.

For the most part the parables were expressions and illustrations drawn

from the lives of the people themselves. Yet in this simple, common

way, Jesus beautifully expressed and interpreted his beliefs and

hopes.

Jesus desired the seed of the Kingdom to be planted in the hearts of people; he hoped for a steady and natural growth until harvest. He must have been expecting that in the then present social order and structure, the evils of life could not be disposed of immediately any more than a hasty disposal of the tares; the Judgment should be the means whereby the separation should be made possible. And if the seed of the Kingdom were to be planted in the hearts of men, it should bring forth righteousness as fruit unto harvest - a righteousness first unto God and coupled with that a righteousness between men. It must embody a love beyond the bonds of race and clan; it must be the love which promotes unselfish service for one's neighbor and a forgiving, repentant trustful spirit in the whole of life. If individuals take on the

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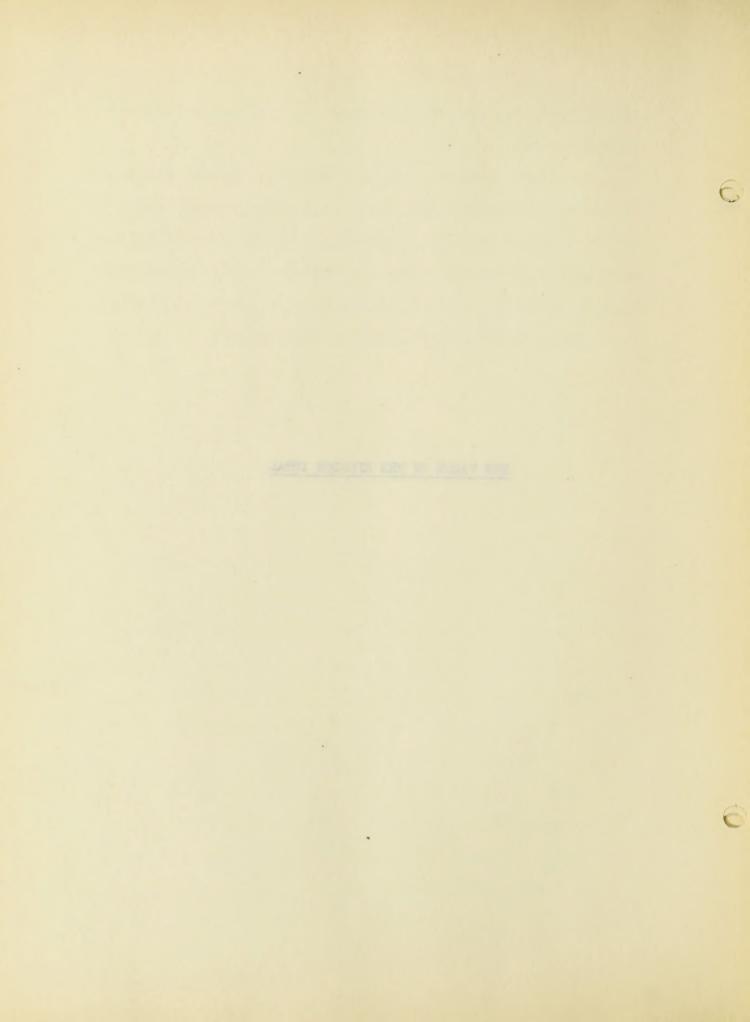
responsibility and respond, then society of itself shall promote the eventful Coming.

Jesus, seemingly, could not stray away entirely from the thought of the apocalyptists. Many of his parables carry as well the idea of a hasty appearance, a judgment, a separation of the righteous from the unrighteous with eternal punishment. It was this old view which he used in his new interpretation, for it gave him something still in the thinking of the people on which to build.

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THE VALUE OF THE KINGDOM IDEAL



In the light of our study of the Kingdom Ideal and its development, we see the importance of the place it has held in the religious thinking of the people since pre-prophetic days. And to-day, as always, it still holds an equally important place in the thought of people. Jesus set it in the forefront of his teaching and though its meaning was therein limited, we have come more and more to see its significance.

As we interpret Jesus' meaning of the Kingdom to-day, we can understand it only as we understand how he took the conceptions of his heritage and modified the view gradually with his own interpretations till it took on the spiritual form which we find it bearing at the close of his ministry. We shall seek therefore to stress that which Jesus implied so strongly as we reread his message in the parables, for our time— the Fatherhood of God, Sonship, and the Brotherhood of Man.

"The heart of a man's faith is what he thinks about God; from

this everything follows." Jesus taught no new doctrine of God, but

adapted and built upon the Old Testament Jewish view and in so doing

raised his conception to a higher plane than that held in the old

view. In this higher conception there lay the roots of all the new

elements of his teaching and of the whole divergence of the Christian

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religion from that of the Old Testament.

Jesus' thought of God as the God of Israel, the God of Abraham,
Isaac and Jacob, was based on the Old Testament revelation, and his
knowledge and nature of God was derived from this revelation, He came
to understand and look upon God as a Father, and the idea hound therein

^{1.} Rall -- The Teachings of Jesus - p. 34.Ch. 3.

^{2.} Wendt -- The Teachings of Jesus- Vol.1, Part 3, Ch.2, p.184.

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came to be an important factor in his teachings. Though the Old Testament view regarded God as King and Father over the people of Israel,

Jesus regarded him as Father over all mankind, and Father of single
individuals. The gospels are permeated with the thought of the Fatherhood of God in His relations to men.

We gather from Jesus' teachings in the parables that Fatherhood embodies and implies mercy. Judaism had thought of God as a lawgiver and an even-handed judge; but Jesus had no room for that in his conception of the Fatherhood. For him God was a Father whose mercy went out to all his children. Jesus brought out this point very clearly when he enunciated his parable on forgiveness - the parable of the cruel servant. Here the laborers were granted mercy in the measure of the spirit put into the service being rendered. But not alone is there mercy exemplified; there is also forgiveness on the part of the Father.

In this Fatherhood, too, there is an unbounded love for all men and for each one, individually. As the shepherd cares for each sheep in his flock, and the woman seeks the lost coin, so Jesus has pointed out God's care for each. And through that sincere love and care for each, God has desired to draw each to Him in fellowship as son to Father, with His will as the great concern for everyone's life.

In the attitude that all are to be sons of the Father, Jesus must have implied "obligation and not privilege, - an inward spirit, not an outward favor." To be a son of God meant more than ordinary sonship; it meant being like God, having the same attributes of righteousness - of mercy, love, and forgiveness, and using them in relation to

^{1.} Matthew 5:45

^{2.} Rall - Teachings of Jesus - p. 47

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Him and to fellowmen. Sonship and brotherhood therefore can hardly be separated for the relationship of one implies the other.

Sonship in one sense becomes a gift to men. The Father has seemingly given it that He might ask it in return. It includes a love prompting forgiveness which cannot be granted without there first being repentance. This we see so clearly in the parable of the Lost Son. It shows how the Father does take one into His fellowship that he might give more fully of himself. In this fellowship too, there must be absolute trust and obedience.

In this paternal love there is bound up the ruling idea of righteousness of the members of the Kingdom. As God exemplified right-eousness in his being so was the righteousness of man to be exemplified by the standard set by God. The Jews already convinced of God's right-eousness in their religious consciousness were also convinced that man-kind owed the performance of righteousness to God. Jesus therefore found that emphasis on righteousness in general was not necessary; it was the kind of righteousness which he proclaimed which was hardly acceptable.

All through Jesus' teaching in the parables he held that the existence and value of righteousness were solely determined by the in-ward man or the heart. Righteousness was a life to be lived with men - a life of good will and service prompted by the inner spirit. The parable of the Good Samaritan emphasizes this in the measure which Jesus meant it, - "Love one's neighbor as thyself." Jesus saw the selfish, unfriendly, insincere spirit in society; he saw and keenly felt the need of helpfulness and service through love. He knew it could only come through a spirit of brotherhood among men.

^{1.} Rall, H. F. - Teachings of Jesus - p. 53

^{2.} Wendt - op. cit. Vol. 1, p. 265

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We may say with Sheldon, "It is precisely by enthroning in his own spirit the principles of the Kingdom that a man comes into true association with the Head of the Kingdom and with his fellow members in the Kingdom. In this sense the Kingdom must enter into him in order that he may enter into the Kingdom; that is, he must receive the principles of the Kingdom in order to enter the circle of the proper associations of the Kingdom."

Today as in the time of Jesus, there is still the need for righteousness in the hearts of individuals. Men have not yet attained the standards therein involved even after these nineteen hundred years. The trust and faith and works exemplified in the life of Jesus are evidence of his sincere belief in the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

The ideal which Jesus has set up comes to be a Christian philosophy for life. It makes possible a natural relationship between man and his God; it gives man a foundation for his thinking and doing; it makes his road and goal in life, life itself; and further than that it makes possible a life radiant with that deeper happiness which comes through service and love for others, even as God expressed it through his Son, Jesus.

^{1.} Sheldon, H. C. - The Essentials of Christianity - p. 237

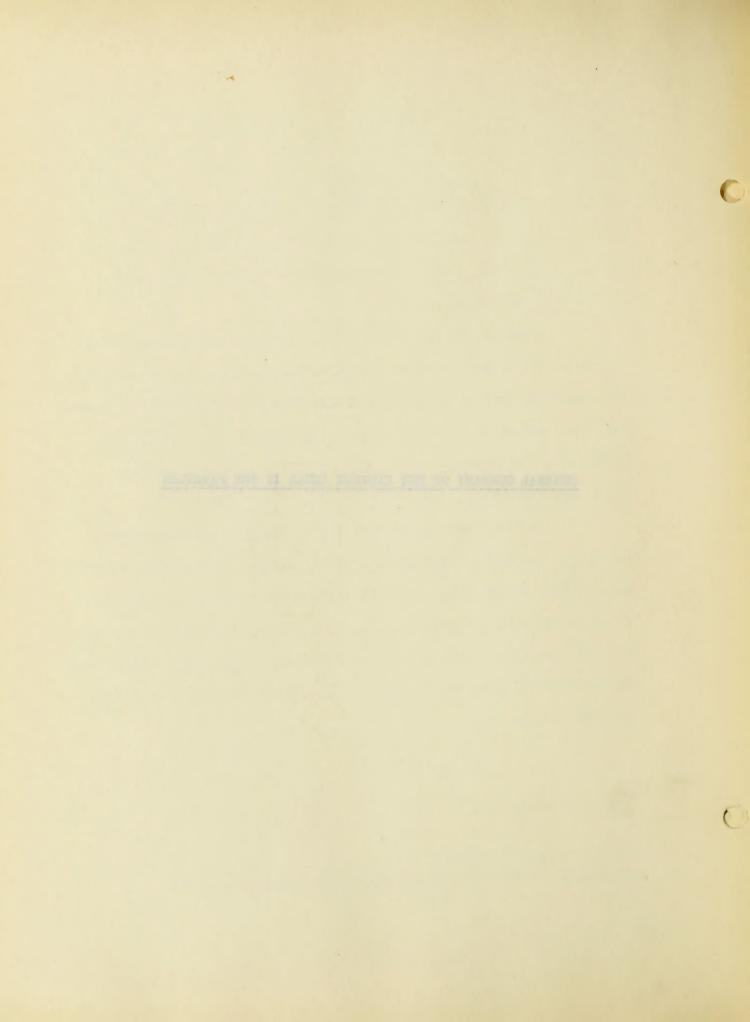
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GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE KINGDOM IDEAL IN THE PARABLES



that the Ideal was not one which grew up in a moment's time; rather it came through and along with the long process and development of the religious thinking of a race. When suffering was intense and only blackness appeared before them, people built up a hope for a time and a place where there should be relief and comfort. Believing in a God who cared for his chosen people, the hope, at first, included only the Israelites themselves. There should be an earthly Kingdom with a ruler like unto one David, who had once been an ideal ruler. Ethical standards built up by the prophets broadened the outlook and made possible a hope for restored Israel after punishment and judgment. Prophecy and those who were prophesying gradually made it possible for other nations to be included in the measure that they recognized Jahwah.

The outlook changed with the Exile. Israel, believing herself to be the instrument in the hands of God for the redemption of all nations, took on new hope. Jahwah, through her, should have sway over all the world. And it was into this growing trend of thought and in the natural order of the evolution of things that Jesus was to take his place.

The hope of a coming Kingdom was carried on by the apocalyptists who had set their hearts on a future redemption of Israel, conceiving it as the central incident in the world-wide transformation. Jahwah should inaugurate a new age with all the evils and imperfections eliminated and over that nation either He or his intermediary should reign. The anticipation of this took deep root in the minds of the Jews and was received with a fresh vitality at the appearance of John the Baptist. John came declaring the certainty and nearness of the Kingdom and offering as a new

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means of preparation for the Judgment, the baptism of repentance.

And thereby should God be able to sift out for himself his new community.

We have seen how Jesus accepted the heritage of the past and current belief of the time which had come from both the prophets and apocalyptists. We have seen too, how he used the past as a foundation on which to build and interpret his message to men. Though he, too, believed in a future Kingdom, perhaps breaking in suddenly and miraculously, he emphasized in his parables the thought that it was already projecting its influence into the present because of the nature of its existence.

Jesus' Kingdom was essentially a Kingdom of God in the hearts and lives of men. It was the kind of a Kingdom which should grow gradually and be built up gradually in lives, for individual lives could only be changed as they were made to see and understand and accept. Society had been corrupt and only as individuals accepted, could society take on a new order.

Jesus' conception of the Kingdom as one of righteousness, therefore, gave new hope to individual life. It gave a new sense of one's place in the world; it built up new relationships with God who once was transcendent, but who now was a Father; and it made possible not only the joy of the relationship of being brothers, but, sons as well, of the same Father.

Jesus' new interpretation of the Kingdom set up a high standard of living and thereby brought all nations and all peoples together under the same Father. It gave a new faith, in Christianity. As each successive age may frame itself in its own vision of fulfillment, the

^{1.} Scott - p. 246. The Kingdom and the Messiah.

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ideas of each find their place in the message of the Kingdom proclaimed by Jesus."

"He expressed it in the language of his own time; but the aspiration which he cherished will ever find response in the hearts of men."

"Thy Kingdom Come, - thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

^{1.} Scott - The Kingdom and the Messiah - p. 257

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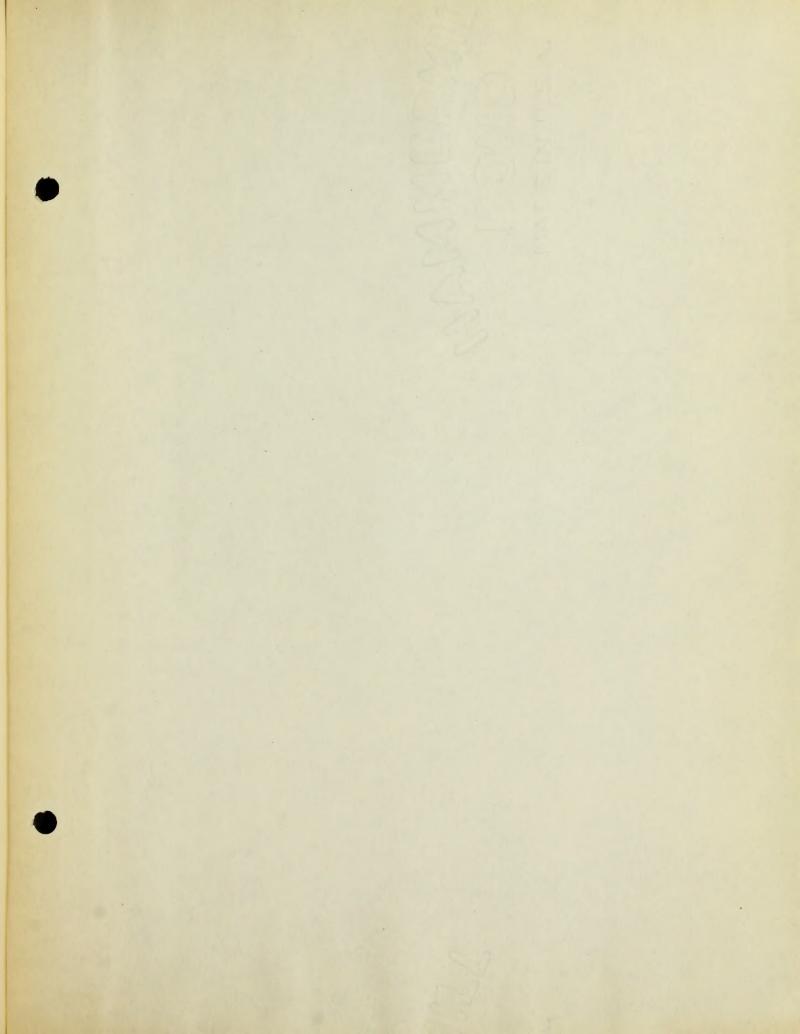
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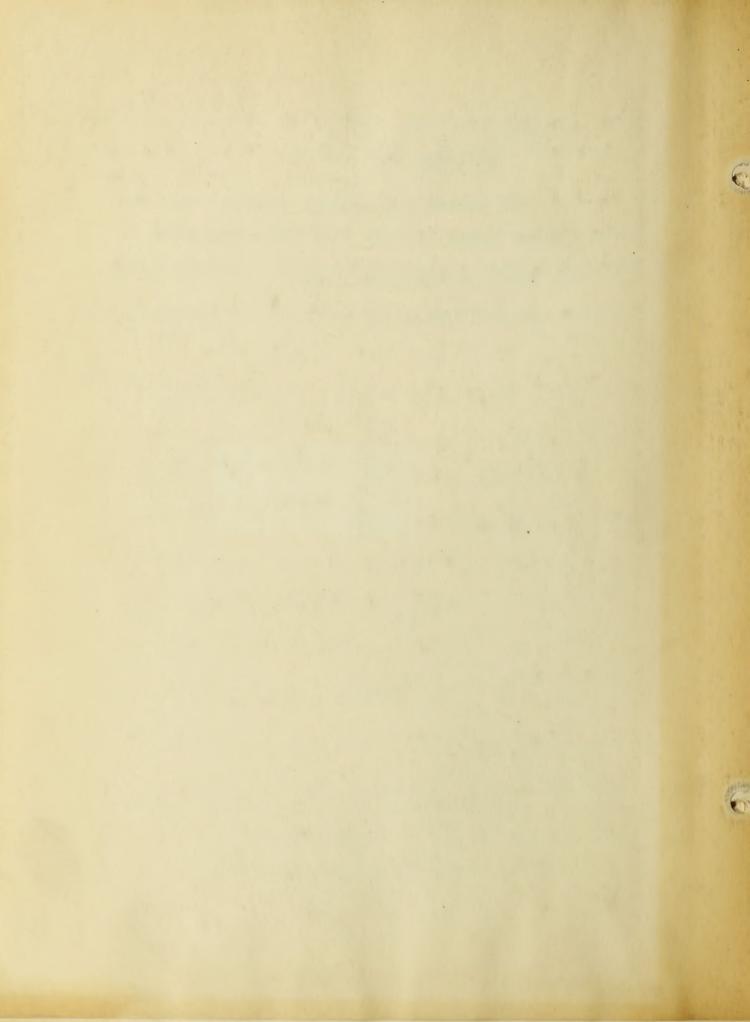
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